



JUN 15 2011

FOIA #FY2010-632974

Mr. Jason Smathers  
MuckRock.com  
185 Beacon Street #3  
Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Mr. Smathers:

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated January 2, 2011. We apologize for the delay in response. You asked for:

All records of communication between your agency and the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships including but not limited to emails, letters or other communication to and from Joshua DuBois or any member of his staff.

We conducted a search for the records you requested. The responsive documents are enclosed. Please note that portions of the enclosed documents have been withheld pursuant to FOIA exemption (b)(6) to protect personal privacy. In this instance we are protecting email addresses. Additional portions are withheld because they are nonresponsive to your request. Those portions are annotated "Nonresponsive."

As the OSEC Disclosure Officer, I believe we performed a reasonable search to your request. Should you disagree, you may file an appeal of this determination with the Solicitor of Labor within 90 days from the date you receive this letter. The appeal must state, in writing, the grounds for the appeal, including any supporting statement or arguments. To facilitate processing any additional correspondence on this matter, please refer to SIMS FOIA number above. The appeal should include a copy of your initial request and a copy of this letter. The appeal must be addressed to: Solicitor of Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Room N-2428 Washington, D.C. 20210. If mailed, both the envelope and the letter of appeal itself should be clearly marked: "Freedom of Information Act Appeal". You may email your appeal to FOIAappeal@dol.gov and attach the same documentation as if you were mailing the appeal.

Sincerely,

  
CHARLOTTE HAYES  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy

Enclosures

Tom, Philip - OSEC

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From: DuBois, Joshua  
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2010 10:41 AM  
To: [REDACTED] *NOW RESPONSIVE*

Seigel, Ben - OSEC; Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**Subject:** RE: REMINDER: 10:30 Morning Call

Prayer breakfast clips –

**Catholic News Service: Obama celebrates Resurrection's 'promise of redemption' at breakfast**  
Speaking of Christ's sacrifice and "the promise of redemption in the resurrection," President Barack Obama welcomed Christian leaders from across the country to an Easter prayer breakfast at the White House April 6.

<http://www.americancatholic.org/news/report.aspx?id=2429>

**Religion News Service: Obama Hosts Easter event**

"For those who are wondering or have doubts about whether he is authentically Christian, I think today's message puts all doubts to rest," said the Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell, another Houston megachurch pastor who attended Tuesday's breakfast.

[http://www.religionnews.com/index.php?/rnstext/obama\\_bares\\_his\\_soul\\_at\\_easter\\_event/](http://www.religionnews.com/index.php?/rnstext/obama_bares_his_soul_at_easter_event/)

**USA Today / Faith and Reason: Obama's Easter prayer guest list 'eclectic' on faiths, politics**

"Overall, it's an eclectic list; much more so than you would have seen with earlier presidents," he said, "Obama has made the most concerted effort to cross the dividing lines."

<http://content.usatoday.com/communities/Religion/post/2010/04/obama-joel-osteen-gay-marriage-easter/1>

**Associated Press: In Personal Terms, Obama Honors Christ's Sacrifice**

In openly personal terms, President Barack Obama on Tuesday honored the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, saying he draws inspiration from an eternal story of pain, suffering and redemption.

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jey6bAYbIWHVdvH6xd5iTGbNk\\_AD9ETKD2G0](http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jey6bAYbIWHVdvH6xd5iTGbNk_AD9ETKD2G0)

**UPI: Obama: White House a place for all faiths**

"U.S. President Barack Obama told a group of Christian ministers Tuesday he was working to make the White House a place where people of all faiths are welcome."

[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/US/2010/04/06/Obama-White-House-a-place-for-all-faiths/UPI-72021270587670/](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2010/04/06/Obama-White-House-a-place-for-all-faiths/UPI-72021270587670/)

**Christian Broadcasting Network: President Welcomes Pastors to Prayer Breakfast**

President Obama welcomed Christian leaders to the White House Tuesday, including some well-known pastors, for an Easter prayer breakfast. About 90 pastors gathered in the White House for the event. As he welcomed them, the president embraced redemption in Christ and called it "one of life's great blessings."

<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/politics/2010/April/Obama-to-Host-Easter-Prayer-Breakfast-/>

**Christian Post: Obama Hosts Easter Prayer Breakfast with Christian Leaders**

President Obama hosted an Easter prayer breakfast Tuesday morning that was attended by prominent Christian

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leaders from across the nation. Some 90 people, including Pastors Joel Osteen and Bill Hybels, attended the White House event.

<http://www.christianpost.com/article/20100406/obama-hosts-easter-breakfast-for-christian-leaders/>

## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Friday, September 03, 2010 9:01 AM  
**To:** Joshua \_DuBois  
**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
**Subject:** CBC Faith-Based Roundtable

Good morning Joshua. Maya Goines informed me that the CBC was hosting a faith-based roundtable on Saturday morning, 10-12 noon at the Convention Center. She said that I should talk with you about attending this event. If you think I should attend, would you please get me an invitation to this event? Thanks for your assistance. Have a great day and restful weekend.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 07, 2010 12:39 PM  
**To:** Joshua DuBois  
**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
**Subject:** retreat next week

Good afternoon Joshua and Ben.

Ben and I will attend the retreat next Friday but I will not be able to attend Thursday. We are attending the AFL-CIO briefing on Thursday day along with Secretary Solis. This is a very critical meeting with worker justice center leaders and funders.

Ben, is there an agenda and directions to the retreat place? Thanks.  
I hope you both have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 09, 2010 11:52 AM  
**To:** 'DuBois, Joshua'  
**Cc:** Wear, Michael  
**Subject:** RE: Strategic plans

Thanks Joshua and Michael. Have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** DuBois, Joshua  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 09, 2010 10:01 AM  
**To:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Cc:** Wear, Michael  
**Subject:** RE: Strategic plans

Adding Michael. I'm not sure if I'm scheduled for this and don't have the info in front of me. Mike, can you advise?

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 09, 2010 9:35 AM  
**To:** DuBois, Joshua  
**Subject:** RE: Strategic plans

Hi Joshua,  
I hope you are feeling well. Maya Goines asked me again this morning if I was planning to go to the CBC Faith-Based Roundtable on Saturday, Sept. 18. I told her that I would talk to you about it. I don't know what the protocol is to get invited to this event? Do you think I should attend and if so, how do I get an invitation? I welcome your assistance with this matter.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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3/7/2011



**From:** DuBois, Joshua

**Sent:** Thursday, September 09, 2010 9:13 AM

[ *NON RESPONSIVE* ]

Tom, Philip - OSEC; L

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**Subject:** Strategic plans

Friends,

We have now met with all Center Directors to talk through and provide feedback on all your Strategic Plans. In the next few weeks, I am asking that each Center vet and get Departmental sign-off on their plans. If possible, it would be helpful if this sign-off could occur before the Sept. 16-17 training and retreat. On the first day of that meeting, we will discuss the big picture of the White House plans in coordination with your strategic plans. On the second day, one of the main elements of the agenda will be hearing from each Center about their plans.

Shortly after the training and retreat, I will be pulling the strategic plans together to making a presentation to the President of our planned activities and goals.

To that end, please work to get approval for your plans as soon as you can.

Many thanks,  
Joshua

3/7/2011

Tom, Philip - OSEC

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From: Tom, Philip - OSEC

Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2010 11:53 AM

To: *NON RESPONSIVE*

Cc: *NON RESPONSIVE*; mvanderslice@www. *(b)(6)* DuBois, Joshua

Subject: RE: Economic Development Working Group

Hi Cedric,  
The date and time works for me.  
Have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2010 1:39 PM  
**To:** 'Joshua \_DuBois'  
**Subject:** Re: REMINDER: Wednesday 3-5 Directors Meeting

Hi Joshua, I can do this Friday late morning or early afternoon.

I told Ben O'Dell that Secretary Solis just hired a new Senior Advisor who is coordinating our outreach efforts. I have our monthly meeting on my schedule but my new boss expects all the outreach staff to attend meetings when we are hosting outside groups such as the state immigrant rights organizations that we are hosting at DOL this Wednesday afternoon.

Phil  
Phil

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**From:** DuBois, Joshua  
**To:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Cc:** Wear, Michael '  
**Sent:** Mon Nov 15 12:58:50 2010  
**Subject:** FW: REMINDER: Wednesday 3-5 Directors Meeting

Can we set up a coffee soon? Would love to discuss how you and I can better coordinate.

Thanks,  
Joshua

## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2010 10:49 AM  
**To:** 'Wear, Michael M.'; DuBois, Joshua  
**Subject:** RE: meeting with Assistant Secretary Oates

Thanks Michael.

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** Wear, Michael  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2010 10:46 AM  
**To:** Tom, Philip - OSEC; DuBois, Joshua  
**Subject:** RE: meeting with Assistant Secretary Oates

Yes. This meeting will be at 708 Jackson Place.

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2010 10:41 AM  
**To:** Wear, Michael; DuBois, Joshua  
**Subject:** meeting with Assistant Secretary Oates

Greetings Michael and Joshua,  
Joshua, I am not going to Boston the next few days and will be able to join you for your meeting with Assistant Secretary Oates on Friday at 2 pm. Is this meeting taking place at your office?

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Monday, November 08, 2010 2:36 PM  
**To:** 'Vanderslice, Mara [L.]'  
**Subject:** RE: Tool-kit Update

Hi Mara,

Just fyi -

Wage theft has become a national epidemic problem impacting low wage and immigrant workers. It means not getting paid for the hours you work, not getting overtime pay, or not getting paid at all. Misclassification means when an employer designates you as a contractor rather than as an employee so that they don't have to abide by wage and hour labor law.

Here's a NY Times editorial last year about it - <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/03/opinion/03thu2.html>. From a national study done on this issue by the Nat. Employment Law Project and the UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment – Broken Laws, Unprotected Workers: Violation of Employment and Labor Laws in America's Cities (2010) cites – “Wage theft not only depresses the already meager earnings of low-wage workers, but also adversely impacts their communities and the local economies of which they are a part. More than 68% of our sample experiences at least one-pay related violation in the previous work week. The average worker lost \$51, out of average weekly earnings of \$339. Assuming a full-time work schedule, we estimate that these workers lost an average of \$2,634 annually due to workplace violations, out of total earnings of \$17,616. That translates into wage theft of 15 percent of earnings.”

Kim Bobo, the Director of Interfaith Worker Justice has written THE book on Wage Theft – Wage Theft in America. Why Millions of Working Americans Are Not Getting Paid- And What We Can Do About it (2009, The New Press).

On the health and safety side, 12-14 workers die on the job every day in the US and hundreds are injured every day, e.g., West Virginia mine disaster and Gulf Coast oil rig explosion. Sec. Solis says that no worker should have to die or be injured on the job.

I'll work on this and get it back to you later this week.

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** Vanderslice, Mara  
**Sent:** Monday, November 08, 2010 2:07 PM  
**To:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC; Gerwitz, Ashley - OASAM  
**Subject:** RE: Tool-kit Update

Phil-

Thanks for getting back to me. Do you have any stats about wage theft issues and how common it is, where it is happening, etc. I also think because this is a relatively new idea in the lexicon, if we could explain more in

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simple terms what this exactly means. Like lay it out in paragraph form.

I think that would help. And please put all prose in print-ready format- without abbreviations and in language you would like to see it printed.

Thanks so much!!

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, November 08, 2010 12:58 PM  
**To:** Vanderslice, Mara [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC; Gerwitz, Ashley - OASAM  
**Subject:** RE: Tool-kit Update

Hi Mara.

Here's my commentary for our two items for your tool-kit.

A pastor should care about worker protection/justice issues if his/her members and neighbors are not getting their just pay or are working in a hazardous work environment, e.g., wage theft, misclassification, health and safety issues. DOL's OSHA and Wage and Hour Division can help his/her members and neighbors understand what their rights as workers are.

A pastor should care about workforce development issues if his/her members are unemployed, underemployed or switching jobs. DOL's workforce development programs can help his/her members and neighbors connect with job training and employment opportunities.

Phil

Phil Tom  
 Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
 U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** Vanderslice, Mara [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, November 08, 2010 9:42 AM  
**To:** DuBois, Joshua P [REDACTED]

*NON RESPONSIVE*

Seigel, Ben - OSEC;

; Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Subject:** Tool-kit Update  
**Importance:** High

Dear colleagues-

Thanks to everyone who sent us your tool-kit items. I appreciate it. We are working to combine and edit them now. We could use one more thing from each Center on the tool-kit items.

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Please send me 1 short paragraph per action item describing why this area is an issue of importance that a local faith-based or community-based organization should care about.

We want to draw them in and some of these areas need to be better described. We want this to be an inspirational and inspire action- many of these pieces need to draw the reader in more. So for example describe why we should care about connecting kids to SNAP, or why we should set up a vets ministry, or why health community centers are a good thing.

Think about it from the perspective of a local pastor picking up this brochure and reading it for the first time, make your case to them why they should want to work on one of these areas.

Call me if you have any questions. Thanks everyone!

**Deputy Director and Senior Policy Advisor | White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
| 202-456-3508- direct**

## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC

**Sent:** Thursday, December 09, 2010 9:38 AM

**To:** 'DuBois, Joshua

Good morning Joshua.

I hope you are having a good morning. You gave a great speech yesterday at the CNBC luncheon. It felt like "family" time for you. Is it possible to give me Dr. Jacqui Burton's email address? I like to contact her. There were too many folks talking to her yesterday after the luncheon. I remember Jacqui from way back when she worked for Lilly Endowment in Indianapolis when I was serving a congregation in Indy. Have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**Tom, Philip - OSEC**

**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2010 10:56 AM  
**To:** 'Wear, Michael I

[NON RESPONSIVE

DuBois, Joshua

]'; Seigel, Ben - OSEC;

**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
**Subject:** DOL E-tool webinar this Thursday  
**Attachments:** DOL E-tools Webinar Invitation 2.docx

Good morning. I want to add my congratulations to Ben and his wife. I have attached information about a webinar we are co-hosting this Thursday to discuss the new e-tools provided by ETA to support folks who are looking for employment training opportunities. Please share this information with your network. Have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
 Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
 U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** Wear, Michael  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2010 10:31 AM  
**To:** Wear, Michael

[NON RESPONSIVE

Tom, Philip - OSEC

] Seigel, Ben - OSEC;

**Subject:** REMINDER: 10:30 Morning Call

The call in information is:  
 Phone:  
 Code:

3/7/2011



## Tom, Philip - OSEC

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2010 1:17 PM  
**To:** 'Wear, Michael .  
**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC; **NON RESPONSIVE**  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting with Joshua DuBois

Greetings Michael **NON RESPONSIVE**  
I just want to let you know FYI that I will not be able to attend since I will be with Secretary Solis in Boston on October 1. She is the keynote speaker that day for National Immigration Integration Conference. If Ben Seigel is available, he will attend. Ben's wife is expecting their daughter soon! Have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** Wear, Michael  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2010 12:55 PM  
**To:** **NON RESPONSIVE**  
**Cc:** Tom, Philip - OSEC; Seigel, Ben - OSEC; '  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting with Joshua DuBois

Mark,

October 1 at 2 PM works for this in-person meeting.

Thanks,  
Michael

**Tom, Philip - OSEC**

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 07, 2010 3:05 PM  
**To:** 'Wear, Michael  
**Subject:** RE: REMINDER: 10:30 Morning Call

Michael,  
I have nothing to provide for Joshua's speech.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** Wear, Michael  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 07, 2010 2:16 PM  
**To:** *NONRESPONSIVE*

Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Subject:** RE: REMINDER: 10:30 Morning Call

Good Afternoon,

As Joshua mentioned on today's call, Center Directors and Deputies will be able to attend the CNBC luncheon at the Omni Shoreham hotel tomorrow at Noon. Joshua will be delivering the keynote at this luncheon.

Joshua is encouraging as many of our Directors and Deputies to attend as possible. Please inform me if you are interesting in attending as I will need to inform the CNBC.

Thanks,  
Michael

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**Seigel, Ben - OSEC**

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**From:** DuBois, Joshua  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 06, 2010 3:30 PM  
**To:** *NONRESPONSIVE*

**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Tom, Philip - OSEC; Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
Welcoming Phil and Ben!

Friends,

It is my great pleasure to welcome Phil Tom and Ben Seigel to our team. Phil and Ben will be in our Center at the Department of Labor.

Phil joins us as the Director of the DOL Center. Phil previously served as associate for Small Church and Community Ministry for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). He has also served as the denomination's associate for urban ministry.

I had the pleasure of interacting with Ben Seigel during his time at Seedco in New York City. Ben has been a thought-leader on workforce development and other issues facing low-income families at that excellent organization, and we pleased to bring his expertise and experience to DOL.

Feel free to welcome Phil and Ben by phone or email, or on the morning call tomorrow.

Thanks,  
Joshua

**Phil Tom**  
Center for Faith-based and Community Partnership  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**Ben Seigel**  
Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

## Seigel, Ben - OSEC

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**From:** DuBois, Joshua  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 31, 2010 2:57 PM  
**To:** Tom, Philip - OSEC; (cc)  
**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
**Subject:** RE: retreat Sept. 16-17

Phil – thank you for the note. The retreat will be an essential time of planning for the faith-based office, and we're really going to need you to be there. Please let me know if you can arrange your schedule accordingly, perhaps you can split time between the retreat and AFL-CIO.

Thanks,  
Joshua

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**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Monday, August 30, 2010 11:16 AM  
**To:** ; DuBois, Joshua  
**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
**Subject:** retreat Sept. 16-17

Greetings Ben and Joshua.

Joshua, I hope you are having a good vacation. I wanted to give you both a heads-up notice that Ben and I may not be able to attend the retreat September 16-17. The AFL-CIO is meeting those days and there will also be a meeting of funders that support worker justice organizations meeting on September 17. Both of these meetings are critically related to our work. We have been asked to attend both of these meetings. I'll keep you informed of our plans. Have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**Seigel, Ben - OSEC**

**From:** DuBois, Joshua F  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2010 12:32 PM  
**To:** Tom, Philip - OSEC; Wear, Michael

[NON RESPONSIVE]

**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
**Subject:** RE: DOL E-tool webinar this Thursday

Thanks Phil. Folks – I hope you will push this out to your networks, so many in our communities are concerned with jobs and ETA has great tools. We need to spread the word.

**From:** Tom, Philip - OSEC  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2010 10:56 AM  
**To:** Wear, Michael R.;

[NON RESPONSIVE]

Joshua  
Vanderslice, Mara

Seigel, Ben - OSEC;

**Cc:** Seigel, Ben - OSEC  
**Subject:** DOL E-tool webinar this Thursday

Good morning. I want to add my congratulations to Ben and his wife. I have attached information about a webinar we are co-hosting this Thursday to discuss the new e-tools provided by ETA to support folks who are looking for employment training opportunities. Please share this information with your network. Have a good day.

Phil

Phil Tom  
Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships  
U.S. Department of Labor

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**From:** Wear, Michael  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2010 10:31 AM  
**To:** Wear, Michael

[NON RESPONSIVE]

DuBois, Joshua

**Subject:** REMINDER: 10:30 Morning Call

Tom, Philip - OSEC

**From:** DuBois, Joshua [B)(6)]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 15, 2010 3:50 PM  
**To:** FN-WHO-WHPartnerships  
**Subject:** Weekly Update

Friday, October 15, 2010

Friends,

Hope you had a great week! I wanted to drop a quick line with an update on President Obama's work and our efforts here in the faith-based office.

### **Jobs and Infrastructure**

You may have seen that President Obama recently announced a new proposal to invest in American infrastructure. The bottom line is this: our country is bleeding dollars because of aging roads, airports and other infrastructure. At the same time, China's building dozens of new airports and 170 new mass transit systems. We can either invest in our national infrastructure – and put people back to work– or keep lagging behind and losing money at the same time.

### **Adoption**

This has been a big month for strengthening adoption and finding families for children who need them. Our Office recently hosted the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's Angels in Adoption honorees, and we sponsored a webcast announcing an increase in the Adoption Tax Credit. Listen, the ATC is really great news for folks considering adoption. The new health care law bumped it up to **\$13,170** and made it "refundable," which means you can claim the credit regardless of how much you pay in taxes. Talk about things you didn't know about health reform! This will help tens of thousands of families and kids all across our country.

### **Why Cut Education?**

Any middle class parent or student who's worried about paying college tuition will tell you that \$2,500 makes a big difference when it comes time to pay the bills. I know I've certainly been in that position. That's why it's dumbfounding that Congress would consider cutting the "American Opportunity Tax Credit," along with other education funding. President Obama is fighting this tooth and nail; you can find out more here.

### **Advancing Interfaith Cooperation**

I traveled to Rome this week to deliver a keynote address to the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See's Interfaith Action Conference. The conference was focused on how religious organizations can join together to address development, environmental and peace-building challenges. My main point is that we can retain our different beliefs but find some common principles that bind us together as human beings, and drive us to action. You can read the speech here; I'd love your feedback.

### **What Does Health Reform Mean?**

Too often debates about big issues get caught up in politics and posturing, and health care in America is not immune. There are a couple bottom lines about the new health care law that I think folks should know. It really boils down to this:



- Insurance companies can't deny coverage to sick kids any more. They can't put a lifetime limit on your benefits. They can't cancel your policy without proving fraud. And they can't deny your claims without a giving you a chance to appeal.
- Now, for the first time Americans can receive free preventive services. Young folks can stay on their parent's health plan until age 26 (so no more worries about coverage dropping right after college). And you can use the nearest emergency room without paying a penalty – because the last thing you need to worry about in an emergency is a higher copay.

Common-sense reforms. More compassionate health care. I'd love any thoughts or questions folks have on this.

### Picture of the Week

On the lighter side, I love this one: Lynne Silosky, a niece of Staff Sergeant Robert J. Miller, curtsying with First Lady Michelle Obama during a meeting in the Oval Office. Later, Obama awarded Staff Sergeant Miller the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroic actions in Afghanistan.



Friends, hope you have a great weekend and are able to get some rest. We've recently added some new folks and fixed a couple problems with our list; if at any point you'd like to stop receiving this, just let me know.

All my best,

Joshua